

to Solzhenitsyn can attest to this truth. Their lives in captivity did not improve because President Reagan quietly urged Gorbachev to set them free, but because he publicly shamed them.

In Egypt opposition leader Ayman Nour, who was himself inspired by President Bush's call for democracy in Egypt, challenged Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak in the 2005 elections and was jailed prior to the election. His wife has tirelessly advocated for his release with inconsistent help from the U.S.

Nour's plight is indicative of a confused policy in Egypt and throughout the Middle East which gave occasional lip-service to human rights and freedom and then rarely stood with reformers who dared to answer the call.

In 2002, the administration boldly threatened to withhold additional foreign assistance to Egypt, the second largest recipient of U.S. aid since 1979, largely because of their imprisonment of pro-democracy activist Saad Ibrahim. This was the first time that any administration linked the human rights of a Middle Eastern country to its eligibility to receive foreign assistance. The efficacy of this approach was apparent when Ibrahim was eventually released.

The amount of aid we give Egypt is a powerful means of prompting political reform and protection of vulnerable minorities, like the 9 million Coptic Christians—an ancient community withering under tremendous pressure. But the visionary approach of the early days of the administration quickly faded to business as usual with the U.S. expressing only mild disapproval over Mubarak's February 2006 announcement of the delay of municipal elections and aid continuing unabated.

Vietnam is another example, like China, where trade has trumped human rights for the last 8 years. Just this summer, Vietnamese Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung visited the U.S. but the focus of talks with the President was almost solely on economic cooperation with little to no mention of human rights abuses particularly of political dissidents and the Christian minority.

Since 2004 Vietnam had been on the Countries of Particular Concern list annually put out by the State Department which names the worst violators of religious freedom. But in 2006, on the eve of the President's visit to Hanoi, Vietnam was removed despite persistent abuse, harassment and detention for those seeking to practice their faith outside of government approved religious organizations. Shortly after the removal the government launched a crackdown. Sadly we had relinquished a major diplomatic tool for bringing about reform.

If China is any indication of the future, we would be naive to assume that more trade between our two countries will bring about political reform.

The list of missed opportunities goes on and on. The ancient community of Iraqi Christians is on the verge of extinction, Egypt's Bahais continue to be denied basic rights, the people of Tibet are helpless to do anything as their homeland is plundered, a sobering assessment on this International Human Rights Day which marks the 60th anniversary of the U.N. adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

President Reagan once said, "To prisoners of conscience throughout the world, take heart; you have not been forgotten. We, your

brothers and sisters in God, have made your cause our cause, and we vow never to relent until you have regained the freedom that is your birthright as a child of God."

A word to my Republican colleagues as our party seeks to once again find its voice in the aftermath of a difficult election year: we must return to the principles at the heart of the Republican Party—the party of Lincoln and Reagan. We must affirm that we stand for the defenseless, champion liberty, confront injustice. In the words of our own party platform let us not forget that, "the international promotion of human rights reflects our heritage, our values and our national interest."

And to my Democratic colleagues, specifically President-elect Obama, I pray that the words which rang out on the night of his historic victory will in fact be realized during his administration. He rightly spoke directly to those "huddled around radios in the forgotten corners of the globe," and told them that the "true strength of our nation comes not from the might of our arms or the scale of our wealth, but from the enduring power of our ideals: democracy, liberty, opportunity and unyielding hope." I would go a step further. America is never more strong, never more fully America, than when we are seeking to secure these ideals the world over: for the Egyptian opposition leader, the Chinese house church pastor, the Vietnamese reporter, the Darfurian refugee.

#### COMMENDING THE CENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY OF THE VILLAGE OF MORGANZA

#### HON. RODNEY ALEXANDER

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, December 10, 2008*

Mr. ALEXANDER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the Centennial Anniversary of the Village of Morganza.

Named after the first American sheriff of Pointe Coupee Parish, Colonel Charles Morgan, the Village of Morganza was incorporated in 1908.

Originally from Pennsylvania, Morgan came to Pointe Coupee Parish in 1830. He was a prominent land-owner in the parish, and served in the Louisiana Legislature and represented the Mississippi River Authority.

During the Civil War, the Village of Morganza was the site of a Union Army encampment. Several battles were fought in this area throughout the war. The largest conflict in Pointe Coupee Parish occurred at nearby Stirling Plantation, on September 29, 1863.

Just before the turn of the Twentieth Century, the Morganza Post Office was organized, and the Town Hall was built in 1968.

St. Ann's Catholic Church was founded in 1916, but was so severely damaged by storms in 1934 and 1935, the structure was later destroyed. The present church building was dedicated in October 1935.

The Village of Morganza is perhaps best known for the Morganza Spillway which helps control flooding on the lower Mississippi River. It is also commonly known for featured scenes in the movie "Easy Rider" in 1968.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the Centennial Anniversary of the Village of Morganza. I am proud of the

residents of this historical community for ensuring its charm and spirit is as strong today as it was 100 years prior.

#### HONORING JIM WITT, CITY MANAGER OF COPPELL

#### HON. KENNY MARCHANT

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, December 10, 2008*

Mr. MARCHANT. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize Jim Witt, who is retiring after fifteen years of service as City Manager of Coppell, Texas. His dedication to the community proves that citizens can truly make a difference in the lives of others, and I am proud to honor such a distinguished leader.

Mr. Witt has played an indispensable role in the development of Coppell during his tenure. In his fifteen years of service, Coppell has increased its size by 19,000 residents, the City staff increased from 178 to 365, and the City budget grew from roughly \$15 million to approximately \$81 million.

Mr. Witt oversaw tremendous economic growth in Coppell. Many of the buildings in Coppell that stand as cornerstones of the community were only possible through the efforts of Mr. Witt. To name just a few of the buildings he has played an instrumental role with: the Justice Center, three Fire Stations, a Fire Administration building, a Service Center, the William T. Cozby Public Library, an Aquatics and Recreation Center, a Municipal Cemetery, Wagon Wheel Park, Andy Brown East and Central, MacArthur Park, over six miles of trails, Town Center Plaza, and the Community/Senior Center.

With Mr. Witt's leadership, he helped create several community-based initiatives such as Farmers Market, community gardens and the half-cent sales tax for schools.

On behalf of the 24th District of Texas, I would like to thank Mr. Witt for his tireless service to Coppell. Mr. Witt's successes have been many, and it is an honor for me to recognize him for his nearly two decades of contributions to the people of Coppell. I ask all my colleagues to join me in wishing Jim Witt continued success in his future.

#### IN HONOR OF DR. CORNELIA N. WINNER

#### HON. MICHAEL N. CASTLE

OF DELAWARE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, December 10, 2008*

Mr. CASTLE. Madam Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to recognize Dr. Cornelia N. "Connie" Winner. In December 2008, Dr. Winner will retire after thirty-six years of service to Delaware Technical & Community College.

Dr. Winner's involvement with the college began in 1972, when she took a position at the Wilmington Campus as an instructor in the Secretarial Technology Department. Just eight years later, Dr. Winner became Chairperson of the campus Technology Department. In 1985, she was made Assistant Dean of Instruction of the Stanton/Wilmington Campus. During the remainder of her time at Delaware Tech, Dr.